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and students of sociology were rather startled by the announcement that twenty-nine per cent or nearly one-third of the young men of America between the ages of 21 and 31 were found physically unfit for military service. This emphasizes the necessity for routine physical examination for the discovery of incipient diseases or physical defects. It also emphasizes the value of a routine military service even for its physical benefit as well as its necessity for national protection in America today.

The solution of all of these problems rests in the hands of the educated and thoughtful people of America, who must see to it that those in the ignorant classes are given the necessary instruction either by medical men, nurses, or civic organizations in the principles of health and hygiene. Patriotic duty demands active coöperation with health authorities and obedience to rules and regulations which are the crystallized sentiment of the best scientific minds of the country. Education without health is useless, and education is far more useful than legislation. We have enough laws on our statute books to last for fifty years, but unless we realize that it is necessary to obey these laws and that health is a physiologic function of the community our efforts will be in vain.

ELIMINATING VICE FROM CAMP CITIES

BY MAJOR BASCOM JOHNSON,

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The principles underlying and the reasons for the existence of a recreation program are well known to everyone. Every modern, up-to-date municipality has a playground system, and the people have become thoroughly familiar with the reasons why such a program ought to exist in every well-regulated city. The old maxim of "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," does not need much change to apply to the troops—that all drill and no recreation makes a pretty dull and, under certain environment, a pretty bad soldier. It seems hardly necessary, therefore, to dwell very much upon the recreation program of the Commission on Training Camp Activities. The program is well developed, is very comprehensive, and runs the gamut from athletic coaches and Liberty theaters

inside the camps to recreation and social opportunities in the communities outside the camps. This program is based on the principle that soldiers prefer clean, red-blooded, wholesome recreation to the other things which have usually in the past contributed to their inefficiency.

Let us consider, therefore, the efforts of the commission to remove those sinister influences which, if unchecked, tend to flourish in camp communities. I refer particularly to prostitution and venereal disease. In this crisis which we are facing we begin to realize more and more that the war will be won upon the basis of man power, and that any influence which results in the deterioration of that man power, which loses to us a single soldier unnecessarily from any preventable cause amounts to a crime against humanity. Venereal diseases in the past have been the greatest single cause of such loss of man power, and hence of inefficiency in the army. Philadelphia has recently passed through, or, rather, its officials I might say, have recently passed through an educational process. Philadelphia's officials have had to be shown that vicious conditions in a city are sure to cripple the man power of the army and the navy, and that those conditions cannot be allowed to exist. Many people used to believe that these vicious influences, red-light districts and prostitution in connection with army camps, were either necessary or inevitable, and so we have had to demonstrate that a clean camp city is practical as well as necessary.

No other government in the history of the world has taken the stand on this question that the United States government has taken. The Council of National Defence, with the Secretary of War presiding and the Secretary of the Navy present, in connection with a large number of well-known educators, psychologists, doctors, lawyers and men of affairs throughout the country, who have studied the problem of the social evil, unanimously decided, not by a divided vote but unanimously, that continence for the armies and navies of the United States was a perfectly practical program and the only sure preventative against venereal disease. That pronouncement is revolutionary. It marks an epoch in the history of the governments in the world. It fell to the lot of the Commission on Training Camp Activities to demonstrate that this new principle was a practical principle, that it meant the saving of thousands of troops from incapacitation—that when these soldiers came back to their

home communities they would come back clean and would not contaminate society nor bring to their wives and to their children and to their children's children the heritage of an unclean life. That has been demonstrated.

Just a word in proof. Before the war, during the year 1916, the annual venereal disease rate in the army was 91 per thousand. That meant that 91 men out of every thousand in the army had one of the venereal diseases some time during the year. If that rate were kept up during the first year of the war with the 1,600,000 men in the army we should have during that period 145,000 troops incapacitated from venereal diseases. The Surgeon-General's office estimates that the average time during which soldiers so diseased are incapacitated for service is 18 days. That would have meant that 2,620,800 days of training and military service would have been lost to the United States. The Surgeon-General also estimates that 25 per cent of soldiers who contract venereal disease are permanently impaired, not necessarily totally impaired but impaired for the hardest kind of active service. If the pre-war rate of disease had continued, nearly 36,400 troops would have been permanently impaired and unable to perform anything but the lightest form of service. That is more than a division—more than most of our cantonments now have.

As a matter of fact, if the present rate of venereal disease in our armies as a whole is maintained for the balance of this the first year of the war since mobilization, this loss will have been reduced nearly one-half. That means a saving of 72,800 soldiers from contamination; it means a saving of 18,200 soldiers from permanent impairment. When we remember that it costs approximately \$5,000 to train, equip and place each soldier in the trenches we can figure the tremendous financial saving alone in such a reduction of the venereal disease rate. The saving of the 18,200 soldiers who would constitute a total loss as far as trench duty is concerned would mean a financial saving of \$91,000,000. But the saving in money alone by this reduction of the rate of venereal disease represents only a small part of the saving. Think of the saving in man power and in morale on the side of the army and the saving to society in broken lives and homes wrecked when the soldiers come marching home.

Now, what are the activities of the commission to this end?

We have had to bring pressure to bear on seventy-five or eighty cities throughout this country. I believe the exact number of red-light districts that have been closed at the request, and I may say at the pointed request in some cases, of the Secretary of War or the Secretary of the Navy, is eighty-one. In addition to these eighty-one cities who have wiped out their venereal disease swamps, as we sanitarians like to call them, there are countless others that have inaugurated campaigns of vice suppression. Before the war it was the belief of many intelligent people that the elimination of a red-light district and of vice brought no substantial results, that it only scattered vice into the resident sections of the city. There were not any statistics to prove anything either way because the records in the police departments and the district attorney's offices have never been adequately kept. Now, however, we are able to prove that this kind of a campaign does bring practical results and an immense improvement in conditions.

Before the war there were two camp cities in this country—I will not name them—who were responsible for the highest venereal disease rates among the troops stationed near their borders. One of these cities was responsible for a venereal rate of 250 per thousand among its troops, and the other for a rate of 200 per thousand. A report has just come in from the latter of these cities. This rate of 200 had fallen to 167 in October of this year, after the recreation program which I have described had gone into effect and some results had been achieved thereby. In October we got our law enforcing forces to work in that city. We brought pressure to bear upon the judges, we brought pressure upon the mayor, we brought pressure upon the district attorney, we got the judges to convicting, we provided hospital facilities and quarantine facilities for those afflicted with these diseases, and during the month following that campaign the rate ran down.

Prior to October, 826 men would have been exposed to venereal disease during the following year if the existing rate had been maintained. But by making prostitutes inaccessible by a vigorous law-enforcing and the public health campaign, the rate of exposures to these diseases dropped from 826 in October to 497 in November, showing conclusively that the amount of exposure to venereal disease among troops varies directly as the accessibility of prostitutes to them. This campaign was continued during the following month,

so that in January the prophylactic rate had dropped down to 251 per thousand, and during these same months the venereal disease rate dropped 167 per thousand down to 40.5 per thousand. Law-enforcement program against vice, which includes treatment and quarantine of those infected, will produce very remarkable results. This shows what most of us have believed, but have never been able to prove, viz.: that a great many men drift into immorality who, if prostitution and vicious conditions are not thrown in their faces, will not seek them.

That is only a sample of what is going on all over the country today. We have eliminated open vice everywhere so that there are today no cities or towns within five miles of an army or navy station where bodies of men are in training where such conditions obtain. Our end is military efficiency. I think we may fairly maintain that the activities of the commission have contributed in no small measure to that end and that new standards have been set in the government of our cities which will persist to the benefit of the whole nation after this war has been won.